

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

Boise, Idaho

October, 1999

Volume 3, Number 10

News

The article in the September 10, 1999 **Idaho Statesman** said that entry to the Idaho Brewers Festival would cost "\$10, which gets you five tokens, each good for a 7-ounce brew. Additional tokens cost just \$1." How could I miss that? So, I put down my money and went in. The breweries represented 7 states and perhaps 20 varieties of local brewing. The tokens were uniface wood with a logo identical to the one on the sample glass. It contains a mixture of upper and lower case letters, and all the N's are backwards: **thE iNLaNd NoRthWESt / BREW / tOpia**. I have no idea what the "topia" part means, but it is possibly an acronym for an association of small breweries, as I now suspect that this is an event that moves around the Northwest and is held several places every year.

Garden City

September 18, 1999 was celebrated as "Garden City Day" to mark the 50th anniversary of the town's founding. Garden City, like several others in the state, was a product of the gambling laws on the books in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Slot machines and other forms of gambling were permitted in incorporated areas of the state if "local option" elections favored it. For the most part, gambling was outlawed in the established towns, so new towns, were incorporated in recreational areas and locations adjacent to some larger cities. Often they became Idaho's odd "strip" towns that were a foot wide and miles long linking several roadhouses. The village of Garden City was established on about 100 acres along Highway 20/26 between what is now 32nd and 37th streets.

Much of the level land on the south side of the Boise River below the City of Boise had been used to raise hay for the Army's post at Fort Boise (later Boise Barracks). Tom and Julia Davis bought 800 acres of this land in the 1920s and leased it to Chinese truck farmers whose vegetable gardens supplied produce to Boise and the surrounding area for years. As time went on, this rural area became known unofficially as Garden City and the name stuck when it was incorporated. The main street through town had become known as New Franklin Road, but that was confusing as Boise already had a Franklin Street (on the north edge of downtown) and Franklin Avenue (just south of the railroad tracks on the Bench). In 1952 a competition was held to name Highway 20/26 through the area. A contraction of the words Chinese and Garden became Chinden Boulevard. Garden City itself has expanded to the west and now includes the Western Idaho Fairgrounds and newer upscale residential areas.



The only token-using business from the early days of Garden City was the Pink Elephant Club. The January, 1952 Boise telephone directory Yellow Pages lists it as the Pink Elephant Drive In under "Beer Parlors". I have been unable to determine the exact location of this business or any information about its owners. There are two denominations known, both are aluminum and round. The 21mm 5¢ piece is the common one with about 10 examples known to me. The 26mm 25¢ one is known in one example only.

The Future Look of Tokens?

Bill Gleixner has been actively checking out contemporary businesses using tokens. He found two Boise companies using a different form of token; these items are destined to be collectables and perhaps even the shape of tokens to come.

First is the "Player's Card" from an arcade in the Edward's Theatre complex on Overland Road. Rather than using metal tokens, credits are added and subtracted via the magnetic strip on the reverse of this card. The card is inserted into a reader on each machine. This concept is the next evolutionary step from a coin/token slot.



Second is a "TOKENOTE" paper token, which, according to the carwash attendant Bill spoke to, is reusable. It appears to use the same principal as automated teller machines: light is passed through the bill and detected or not at certain points. This piece is the same size as regular currency and has been printed with coded stripes in the dark area on the "reverse"

Leeright

If you drive the Interstate highway between Mountain Home and the Magic Valley, you will notice remnants of a canal system along the way. These are reminders of an imaginative scheme to divert waters of the Malad River before it empties into the Snake River between Hagerman and Bliss. The water flows through a system of canals and siphons crossing the Snake to irrigate the land along the north side of the river in the small but fertile valleys near King Hill, Glens Ferry, and Hammett. The water rights were first filed on as part of a placer mining operation, but later were used to bring the land under irrigation. 1908 and 1909 saw a lot of construction activity in the three valleys, and prospective landowners beat a steady trail to the area, having read glowing descriptions in the newspapers of the East and Midwest.

George W. and Emily Cassandra Pyatt Leeright of Murphysboro, Illinois and their five sons heeded the call and arrived in Medbury, Idaho in December, 1909, and took up a 40-acre farm in the Cold Springs area. They arrived with a crowd of other land seekers just prior to the December 17 deadline by which preference holders of land on the Medbury Tract had to file on their land. On that day, according to the December 22, 1909 **Glenns Ferry Gazette**, 76 forty-acre farms were filed on. Earlier in December, the official name of the town of Medbury was changed to Hammett, in honor of Charles H. Hammett, financier of the project. The Leeright family settled in for a long winter and waited for spring and for the water to arrive. Farming proved tough in the area as it was near the lower end of the project and suffered from lack of water every time a wooden flume would break. The family joined in community activities, Mrs. Leeright being one of the charter members of the Hammett women's civic organization, the J. O. C. Club. A daughter, Betty, was born while the family was in Hammett.

In 1916 the Leerights sold their farm and moved to Burley where they invested in two cigar store and pool hall businesses. The Stag, in Rupert, was operated by J. Robert and Worth R. Leeright, while the Mascot Cigar Store in Burley was ran by Frank E., George Jr., and their father, George W. Leeright. Both of these businesses were listed in the directories as being operated by the Leeright Brothers. Soon, the United States entered into the World War and three of the Leeright sons went into the Army. In a letter that appeared in **The Idaho Statesman** on November 4, 1917, Mr. & Mrs. Leeright reported that they had "three sons in the service of the country. Frank E. Leeright is in the medical corps at Fort Riley, Kan., and George W. Leeright and Worth R. Leeright are in training at American Lake, Wash. 'We are proud that we can help our country by giving these three sons, and if that is not enough, we have two more boys to give.'" At the time, however, these sons were J. Robert who was 23 and married and Albert, who was 17 and blind.

At the end of the war, J. R. Conway's book, **Cassia and Minidoka Counties in the World War**, stated that George Leeright served in a machine gun battery and had been twice wounded in France, losing his right leg on the Soissons front. He returned to the United States in February, 1919. Frank had attained the rank of Sergeant in the Medical Corps, receiving a citation for splendid work in France, and was discharged at the end of April, 1919. Worth served in an infantry division and was wounded in France. At the time of writing of the book, he was still serving in the Army Postoffice in France. The family placed this ad in the history book that covered both stores.

LEERIGHT BILLIARD PARLOR
CHOICE LIST OF CLABS, CIGARS
AND SOFT DRINKS

To have fought a good fight; to have faced hell and worse; to have played the man; to have faced the unknown clear-eyed and unafraid;—'tis like a gold thread in the dull grey paths of life. While three of us were serving the colors, I'd stayed at home and made good by running the business. ♣ As ready to serve you now as we were to serve our country, we invite you to come in when in need of anything pertaining to our line.

The Mascot Cigar Store

LEERIGHT BROS., Proprietors

Go where the BIG CROWD goes. Go where
EVERYBODY goes.

Go where the BIG FLAG hangs and support the THREE
BROTHERS who FOUGHT to defend it.

If you play billiards, play in a SOLDIER BOY'S place.

Meanwhile, across the river in Burley, they advertised the Mascot Cigar Store in this similarly patriotic ad.

After the end of the War, J. Robert continued in the Rupert store, and Worth worked the Burley store with the rest of the family. In 1920, Robert sold the Stag to Elred L. Ansell and George E. McClay and took on the Buick franchise

for Rupert. Cassie Leeright's health was weakening, so Mr. and Mrs. Leeright and sons Frank, Worth, and Albert moved to Glenss Ferry in January of 1921, leaving George Jr. in Burley to run the store. The mother's health failed quickly after the move, and she passed away on March 14, 1921. Soon after arriving in Glenss Ferry, the senior George Leeright bought the Derrail cigar store in Glenss Ferry, and operated it with Frank. In that year it was listed as Leeright Bros., branch of Burley, but 1921 was the last year I find them listed in Burley. George moved to Los Angeles shortly after this time, and Worth moved to Logan, Utah, Red Lodge, Montana, and finally to Kirkland, Washington.

In 1923, Robert moved from Rupert to Montpelier and tried to sell automobiles for a short time there. He quickly reentered the cigar and billiard business as Leeright's Cigar Store. In 1925 his brother Albert, who had attended the Gooding School for the Blind and subsequently graduated from Burley high School, also moved to Montpelier, establishing himself in a successful insurance business. Albert was Justice of the Peace for Bear Lake County and Montpelier Municipal Judge from 1932 to 1965.

On January 10, 1926, George W. Leeright's car hit a non-movable tree and he was thrown from the vehicle and was knocked unconscious by the frozen ground. His injuries were so severe that he died in a Boise hospital on January 18.

Robert continued with the Montpelier cigar store until 1932 when he turned it over to his brother Frank who ran it until after World War II when he moved to Oklahoma and then Texas. J. Robert Leeright moved back to Rupert in 1932, opening the Leeright Sport Shop there. He ran it for a few years before selling. He continued in the business, working for the Stag for a time in the late 1930s.



The tokens used by this family's businesses are numerous. It is impossible to determine whether any of the twelve known varieties from the Stag in Rupert were put in use by the first Leeright ownership of the store during 1916 - 1920; many of them have the Salt Lake Stamp Co. logo suggesting they were used after 1920. This token is from the early 1930s when J. Robert Leeright moved back to Rupert. More denominations

from this store will probably surface, but for now the only ones known are this brass 5¢ and an aluminum 50¢ piece.

The Mascot Cigar Store tokens of Burley are known in four varieties, two 5¢ and two 12½¢. Business names like this are tough to research as most directories list only the proprietor name.

Fortunately the newspaper ads for the Mascot show that it was operated by the Leeright Brothers.



The Glens Ferry tokens from the Derail are well known to collectors; in fact, the business is still in operation. The 5¢ and 25¢ Derail tokens are apt to be from after the Leeright's period of ownership. I suspect that the \$1 Sport Shop token is also from the Leeright business, based on the use of the "Sport Shop" name elsewhere. There are probably other denominations from the Sport Shop yet to be reported.



New Books

Greg Manos reports that there is a new book out on Treasureton, Idaho. He believes the price for a hardback and shipping is \$48.55 from the author, Ida Beth Denton at 10085 North Treasureton Road, Preston ID 83263.

The **Idaho Statesman** is advertising a holiday gift book, **Treasure Valley Memories**, with pre-publication pricing and shipping at \$35.95. Let me know if you want further information on this hardback containing 300+ historic photos of the area.

Henry Stampede

This token is one that has confused more than one person. One of the better laughs I have had is finding it listed in Russell Rulau's **Tokens of the Gay Nineties**. The 1890s! Rulau has been criticized for some of the pieces listed in his books, and this is an example where he really missed the mark! So, just who was this guy, Henry Stampede, and what was his line?

If you travel north of Soda Springs on State highway 34 for about 20 miles, you come to Blackfoot Reservoir and the "dot on the map" called Henry. Founded in 1897 by Dutch pioneer, John Henry Schmidt, Henry became known as "The place where time stands still". The **Soda Springs Sun** of July 27, 1950 related that in 1918, a few cowboys on the Walter Hogan ranch on Meadow Creek near Chubb Springs who had heard of the rodeos at Calgary, Pendleton, and Cheyenne, "thought it a good idea to try one of their own. A small corral was built of poles and chutes were erected and preparations completed for the first show." They had spread the word and drew quite a crowd to the affair – enough to make them want to try it again the following year. The lack of proper accommodations on the Hogan ranch necessitated moving the event to a level area adjacent to the town of Henry. So, in 1919 the Henry Stampede was born. Cowboys and stockmen from far and near brought their families for three days and nights of camping, rodeo, and visiting. Over the next few years the Henry Stampede became one of the larger professional rodeos in the region. Many famous rodeo performers and clowns got their start at the "Plenty Western" Henry Stampede.

After the first years, the event became more than could be managed casually, so it was incorporated in 1922 as the Henry Stampede and Stockmen's Reunion. George Jensen, Claude Goring, Elmer Williams, Lothair Allred, and Jim Chester were the principals in this venture. As time went on, the event drew larger crowds each year for the 3-day run in August. A problem arose in 1927 due to the construction of the dam on the Blackfoot River. The backwaters of the Blackfoot Reservoir rose to nearly the level of the stampede grounds, making the area too wet for rodeo and camping. At the same time, it was thought that the Henry location was perhaps causing attendance to be down since it was so far removed from population centers. The solution was reached by moving the event to the Caribou County seat, Soda Springs, for the 1928 show. Jim Vaughan's 160-acre homestead was chosen for the new venue. Named Stampede Park, it had ample ground for the rodeo, campgrounds, a dance pavilion, and Caribou Gulch, the midway area.

The Henry Stampede struggled during several years in the 30s and 40s. It was suggested that the show should move to Ogden to raise attendance. 1940 saw disappointingly low attendance due to the 3-week earlier than usual grain harvest in the area. Every year it was thought the show would not be put on, but last-minute efforts made it happen until interest in professional rodeo slumped in the 1950s. The Blackburn-Call post of the American Legion in Soda Springs came to the rescue of the Henry Stampede in 1950 by sponsoring the rodeo after it was announced that the rodeo corporation would not be able to put on a show. 1954 saw the 36th (and last) annual Henry Stampede as a professional rodeo. The next two years were "open" rodeos, meaning that amateurs instead of pros were the on the card, and the length was cut back to two days. As near as I can find, the Henry Stampede was not held after the 1956 show.





The brass token from the Henry Stampede was probably used in conjunction with the Caribou Gulch midway, but I have found no reference to it in the newspapers of the day. The tokens may have been used to "promote honesty" among the help hired at the midway games, reducing losses to the game owners by employees pocketing cash.

Mrs. George Jensen wrote this poem in 1952 to record the story of the Henry Stampede.

*Two hardy cowpokes, who so many did know,
Decided their skill they would try, to stage a real rodeo.
George Jensen, the one; quiet and calm ever was he,
Joe Skinner, the opposite, the best helper you ever did see.
Far into the night, yes until the wee hours of the morn,
They talked and discussed until a plan they did form.
Early next morn, regardless of much needed rest,
They saddled their mounts.
One rode to the east, the other took the trail to the west.
They carried their message to all they could find.
On August the tenth, come just as you are,
We're sure no one will mind.
32 years have gone by since that first Stampede day,
When all gathered together, had fun and did play.
Such a day of success and good fun, all the cowpokes did feel.
To carry it on, give it a name would surely be a good deal.
So from far and near early next spring,
Five hombries did meet and decide to give it a fling.
George Jensen, Claude Going, Elmer Williams, Lothair Allred,
And Jim Chester; all good guys you know.
Their energy, effort, and time they'd give to put on a real show.
Their meetings were many, the rides they were long.
But they worked hard, never faltering, in their hearts was a song.
Gentle Valley cavy, the wild horse band:
Hebe and George rounded together.
Drove them to the Henry Stampede,
Hoping they'd have the best kind of weather.
From far and near they did come for the three day rodeo.
To the Henry Stampede camping ground to see a really good show.
Now there's one I just can't leave out, so important was he:
Old faithful black Nig.
We all loved him you see.
On his back, George eared all the bronchos, saddled right on the dot.
If a horse they lacked in the races, Nig was right on the spot.
May the Henry Stampede carry on in years that are to come,
Not forgetting those first willing five, and the work they have done.*

Best regards,

John D. Mutch
7931 Crestwood Drive
Boise, ID 83704-3022
e-mail: tokens@uswest.net